Saint Martin in the Fields

2

Horrid News FROM St. MARTINS:

OR,

Unheard-of Murder and Poyson.

BEING

A true Relation how a Girl not full Sixteen years of age, Murdered her own Mother at one time, and a Servant-maid at another with Ratsbane.

AS ALSO

How she very lately gave Poyson to two Gentlewomen that since her Mothers Death kept and maintained her.

Upon which being aprehended, she has Confess'd the former Villanies; and was on Tuesday last being the 19th of this Instant *June*, committed to Prison, where she now remains.

With the substance of her Examination; the like unnatural Wickedness scarce ever read of before in any Age.

To which is added

The taking of a man for a Murder committed at *Islington* two years ago, *&c.*

With Allowance.

LONDON: Printed for *D. M.* 1677.

Poyson and Murder, &c.

A Preamble, though uſually the Excreſcencie of a Pamphlet, is to this Narrative eſſentially neceſſary, the matter being ſo very ſtrange and impreſidented as requires ſome preparatory Addreſs to recommend it to the ſober Readers belief; It ſcarce falling within the compaſs of Imagination, much leſs credible probability, that an ignorant Girl that has nothing to be read in her face but Characters of Innocence, ſhould be ſo well skill'd and deteſtably practiſed in the myſteries of Poyſoning; that a Childe ſhould be ſo barbarouſly unnatural as to murder her own dear Mother, ſo wickedly cruel that nothing could ſatisfie her Revenge upon the leaſt imaginary Affront, but the lives of all that diſpleaſed her: That ſhe ſhould begin this practice ſo early, continue almoſt two years in it undiſcovered, &c. might render the Relation ſuſpitious, were it not a thing acted ſo neer at hand, ſo lately proſecuted, ſo amply made out both by her own Confeſſion and other circumſtantial Exami-

nations and proofs taken before the Justices, and confirm'd by her present Imprisonment, where she continues to acknowledge the same.

This Girl who has not yet attained to Sixteen years of age, being left, or rather as now appears, having inhumanely made her self Motherless somewhat above a year and a half ago, and consequently seeming an Object of Pity and Charity, was accordingly on that account entertain'd by a good Lady, who being a Widow, another Gentlewoman of good worth in the same Condition dwelt with her, under whom this unhappy Wench might have lived very happily, they both carrying themselves very kinde and indulgent to her; but having before made her self guilty of two horrid Murders, no wonder if Divine Justice to bring her to deserved punishment, suffer'd her by attempting a third Villany to discover the two first.

For so it happen'd, that upon some petty Falling-out or Chiding from the two Gentlewomen for some Misdemeanour, or what other provocation, is not yet certainly known, she became so wicked as to mix Poyson with some of their Provision, as she prepared the same for them: Of which they had no sooner eaten, but they both grew desperately sick, so that it was concluded they would immediately have died. Some skilful persons being call'd, concluded by the symptoms that they were poysoned, and accordingly administred *Alexipharmacks* (or Medicines resisting

reſiſting and expelling Poyſon) which with ſpeedy Vomits had ſuch good ſucceſs, as 'tis hoped both their lives are ſafe, though one of them remains ſtill in a very bad Condition.

It was obſervable that a Cat happening to lick up part of what one of the Ladies had caſt, fell into a ſtrange fit of trembling and ſwelling, and in a very ſhort time died.

The Extremity of the danger being paſt, ſtrict inquiry is made into the Author, who 'twas found could be no other than this Girl, having paſs'd through nobodies hands but hers. Hereupon ſhe is ſtrictly queſtioned, and at firſt denied it, though the changeable Colours in her face, and trembling diſorder gave her tongue the lye, and proclaim'd her guilty. At laſt after much importunity and ſome ſuggeſtions of Pardon, ſhe declared, That ſhe did do it, and had given them Poyſon once before, but in ſo ſmall a quantity, that it onely made them ſick for a ſhort time, without further miſchief. She alleadged, that ſhe was inſtigated thereunto by a certain Woman, who is not yet found out, but on what occaſion is not known.

Being further examined how ſhe came by the Poyſon, and whether ſhe knew the deſtructive effects of it, She declared, That it was *Ratsbane* which ſhe had had a great while, and knew what it would do well enough : For ſhe had tried it twice

twice before. This last Expreſſion cauſed them to queſtion her more ſtrictly how ſhe meant; ſhe told them, That before ever ſhe came to her Miſtriſs ſhe gave ſome of it to a Maid that was ſick of the Small-pox, and afterwards gave ſome of the ſame to her own Mother; and they both died upon it.

This Diſcovery, eſpecially concerning her Mother, fill'd all the Company with amazement and horrour, and made them inquire why ſhe could endure to murther her Mother; to which the ſubſtance of her Reply was, That ſhe was very ſickly and troubleſome, and ſhe did it to be rid of her: and ſome ſuch ſorry reaſon ſhe gave for poyſoning the Maid.

Hereupon ſhe was taken into Cuſtody by a Conſtable, and again examin'd before two Juſtices of the Peace; where her Anſwers in effect were the ſame. Inquiry having been made into the manner of her Murthers and that Maids death, the Circumſtances confirm what ſhe confeſs'd, onely were not taken notice of then, becauſe there was not the leaſt ſuſpition of any ſuch Attempt.

She is at preſent committed to Priſon, confeſſing

feſſing ſtill her Crime, but begging of thoſe that come to viſit her, That they would mediate for her to her Lady, to uſe her intereſt to get her a Pardon: But theſe 'tis conceived are vain Childiſh hopes; and it will be better for her to repent, and prepare for her later End: That although ſhe ſuffer juſtly in this World, ſhe may through infinite Mercie obtain forgiveneſs in that which is to Come.

To this lamentable Narrative we cannot but adde another of the ſame Sanguine Complexion; and that is, Of the Apprehenſion of one of the Fellows that about two years ago was ſuſpected for having a hand in Murthering a poor innocent Ditcher neer Iſlington: *For which the other being taken about a Twelvemonth ago, Tryed, and Convicted, was Hang'd, though he caſt the very Act of Killing the man on this; who having lurk'd up and down in ſecret places, maintain'd by his Wife or Woman he uſed to keep Company; but happening lately to fall out with her, ſhe*

for

for some Misdemeanour, procured him to be put into a house of Correction; where a person coming accidentally out of Curiosity to view the House, knew and discovered him; Upon which he was removed in order to his Tryal next Sessions.

BRITISH MUSEUM

FINIS.